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SURVEY OF MODERN-FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN CONNECTICUT.

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THE BACKGROUND, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND COMPETENCE OF A
SAMPLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS WERE REPORTED IN A PILOT
STUDY. QUESTIONNAIRES WERE COMPLETED BY 621 TEACHERS IN THE
SURVEY SAMPLE. EIGHT TABLES WERE INCLUDED ON--TEACHING LOAD,
ACADEMIC TRAINING, LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, TEACHING EXPERIENCE,
CERTIFICATION, CONTINUING PREPARATION, SOURCE SITE OF
DEGREES, AND NONLANGUAGE MAJORS. GENERALLY THE FINDINGS
INDICATED THAT MOST TEACHERS--(1) TAUGHT FIVE CLASSES, (2)
POSSESSED A BACHELORS' DEGREE, (3) MAJORED IN FRENCH, (4)
ENGAGED IN SOME ADVANCED LEARNING ACTIVITY, AND (5) RECEIVED
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE TRAINING IN THE NORTHEASTERN
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Survey of Modern-Foreign-Language Teachers in Connecticut

BY ROBERT P. SERAFINO

As part of a survey undertaken in fulfillment of a contract with the U. S. Office of Education under the National Defense Education Act, the Modern Language Association commissioned Robert P. Serafino, Foreign Language Consultant of the Connecticut State Department of Education, to make a pilot survey of the foreign-language background, responsibilities, and linguistic and professional competence of the foreign-language teachers in his state. We hope that other states will make comparable studies, and thereby give us this information for the whole country.

DONALD D. WALSH

QUESTIONNAIRES were sent in the spring of 1961 to each of the 493 public-secondary-school teachers listed by the Connecticut State Department of Education as teaching one or more

modern-foreign-language classes. Of these teachers, 448, or 90.9 per cent, completed the questionnaire. Questionnaires were also sent to all private and parochial schools in the state. Completed questionnaires were received from 173 foreign-language teachers in these schools. But since we do not know the total number of teachers in this category, we can not indicate the percentage of response.

The eight tables which resulted from the survey are largely self-explanatory, but here are a few highlights. The largest single group of public-school modern-foreign-language teachers, 137 out of 351, has five classes. In private schools, the largest group (46 out of 168) has four classes. The average public-school modern-foreign-language

class has 33 students and the average modern-foreign-language teacher has a total of 144 students. In the non-public schools, the average class is between 15 and 16 and the average teacher-student ratio 1 to 67.

Almost all the teachers, public- and private-school, have the Bachelor's degree. Over half the public-school teachers and less than half the private- and parochial-school teachers have the Master's degree.

A plurality, though not a majority, of Connecticut's modern-foreign-language teachers had an undergraduate major in French. The next largest group of majors was that in Spanish, and then German. After these three comes the group majoring in Latin, followed by groups majoring in combinations such as Romance Languages or Modern Languages, and then comes the group majoring in Italian. But over 25 per cent of present modern-language teachers in public schools majored as undergraduates in a variety of other fields, ranging from Anthropology to Speech; the corresponding percent for non-public schools is 34.7. In view of

(Continued on page 283)

I. TEACHING LOAD

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
Distribution of Teaching				
Teachers with 1 MFL Class	29	6.5	23	13.3
Teachers with 2 MFL Classes	50	11.2	39	22.5
Teachers with 3 MFL Classes	61	13.6	31	17.9
Teachers with 4 MFL Classes	62	13.8	46	26.6
Teachers with 5 MFL Classes	137	30.6	22	12.7
Teachers with 6 MFL Classes	11	2.5	5	2.9
Teachers with 7 MFL Classes	1	0.2	2	1.2
	351	78.4	168	97.1
Number of Classes				
MFL Classes	1,318		532	
Latin Classes	129		42	
Non-FL Classes	186		92	
Total Number of Classes	1,633		666	
Number of Students				
MFL	43,511		8,181	
Latin	2,400		765	
Others	4,591		2,212	
Total Number of Students	50,502		11,158	
Average Size of Class				
MFL	33.0		15.6	
Latin	18.6		18.2	
Others	24.7		24.0	
All Classes	30.9		16.8	

II. ACADEMIC TRAINING

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
Degrees				
B.A.	445	99.3	169	97.7
M.A.	231	51.6	75	43.4
Ph.D.	5	1.1	8	4.6
Other	21	4.7	13	7.5
Majors				
Undergraduate¹				
French	188	42.0	103	59.5
German	28	6.2	6	3.5
Italian	11	2.5	3	1.7
Russian	1	0.2	—	—
Spanish	81	18.1	18	10.4
Latin	23	5.1	4	2.3
Modern FL Combinations	22	4.9	9	5.2
Other (See Table VIII)	113	25.2	60	34.7
Graduate				
French	105	23.4	61	35.3
German	15	3.3	4	2.3
Italian	8	1.8	—	—
Russian	1	0.2	—	—
Spanish	45	10.0	13	7.5
Latin	10	2.2	2	1.2
Modern FL Combinations	10	2.2	7	4.0
Other (See Table VIII)	143	31.9	33	19.1

¹ The total of the undergraduate percentages is more than 100 because some teachers had majors in more than one field.

(Continued on next page)

II. ACADEMIC TRAINING (Continued)

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
Average Semester Hours				
Undergraduate				
French	26.4	305	68.1	26.3
German	19.1	105	23.4	16.9
Italian	12.4	68	15.2	22.7
Russian	14.6	5	1.1	16.3
Spanish	22.3	207	46.2	18.1
Latin	15.4	113	25.2	12.5
Other	11.4	34	7.6	8.1
Graduate				
French	15.4	220	49.1	24.1
German	19.8	36	8.0	17.0
Italian	21.7	28	6.3	9.1
Russian	17.2	10	2.2	5.5
Spanish	18.2	90	20.1	20.3
Latin	7.8	24	5.4	13.5
Other	3.6	7	3.6	4.0

III. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
French				
Read Easily	359	80.1	161	93.1
Understand Readily When Spoken	314	70.1	148	85.4
Speak With Some Fluency	308	68.8	146	84.4
Write Easily	309	69.0	144	83.2
German				
Read Easily	79	17.6	33	19.1
Understand Readily When Spoken	74	16.5	34	19.7
Speak With Some Fluency	60	13.4	28	16.2
Write Easily	55	12.3	21	12.1
Italian				
Read Easily	87	19.4	30	17.3
Understand Readily When Spoken	74	16.5	26	15.0
Speak With Some Fluency	66	14.7	21	12.1
Write Easily	54	12.1	16	9.2
Russian				
Read Easily	15	3.3	8	4.6
Understand Readily When Spoken	14	3.1	8	4.6
Speak With Some Fluency	12	2.7	6	3.5
Write Easily	9	2.0	5	2.9
Spanish				
Read Easily	224	50.0	76	43.9
Understand Readily When Spoken	199	44.4	62	35.8
Speak With Some Fluency	190	42.4	58	33.5
Write Easily	183	40.8	55	31.8
Other Languages				
Read Easily	25	5.6	21	12.1
Understand Readily When Spoken	30	6.7	19	11.0
Speak With Some Fluency	27	6.0	12	6.9
Write Easily	25	5.6	12	6.9

IV. AVERAGE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
French	11.1	285	68.6	10.5
German	8.3	51	11.4	9.5
Italian	7.8	30	6.7	7.8
Russian	3.8	6	1.3	3.0
Spanish	7.2	179	40.0	8.1
Other Languages	13.0	2	0.4	7.3

V. CERTIFICATION

PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS		
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)
French	314	70.1
German	52	11.6
Italian	45	10.0
Russian	3	0.7
Spanish	225	50.1
Other Languages	4	0.9

VI. CONTINUING PREPARATION

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
Study				
NDEA Institutes				
Summer 1960	60	13.4	1	0.6
Summer 1959	20	4.5	1	0.6
Academic Year 1959-60	1	0.2	—	—
Languages Studied: French	25	5.6	1	0.6
German	6	1.3	—	—
Italian	4	0.9	—	—
Russian	1	0.2	1	0.6
Spanish	26	5.8	1	0.6
Total	62	13.8	3	1.8
Other Summer Study				
1960	48	10.7	18	10.4
1959	51	11.4	12	6.9
1958	37	8.3	7	4.0
1957	22	4.9	9	5.2
1956	17	3.8	8	4.6
Total 1956-60 ¹	175	35.9	54	12.1
Before 1956	196	43.8	113	65.3
Languages Studied: French	79	17.6	30	17.3
German	5	1.1	3	1.7
Italian	7	1.6	—	—

¹ Includes some teachers who studied or travelled more than once in this period.

(Continued on next page)

VI. CONTINUING PREPARATION (Continued)

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (448)	No. of Teachers Answering	Per Cent of Total Survey (173)
Russian	9	2.0	5	2.9
Spanish	48	10.7	15	8.7
Others	3	0.7	1	0.6
Total	151	33.7	54	31.2
Travel in Country Whose Language Now Teaching				
1960	51	11.4	36	20.8
1959	56	12.5	37	21.4
1958	57	12.7	40	23.1
1957	41	9.2	29	16.8
1956	40	8.9	30	17.3
Total 1956-60 ¹	245	54.9	172	99.9
Before 1956	222	49.6	109	63.0
Attend FL Conferences or Meetings Regularly				
Local	208	46.4	35	20.2
State	225	50.2	50	28.9
Regional	125	27.9	52	30.1
National	42	9.4	41	23.7
Read FL Professional Journals Regularly				
<i>French Review</i>	173	38.6	65	37.6
<i>German Quarterly</i>	18	4.0	2	1.2
<i>Italica</i>	12	2.7	1	0.6
<i>Slavic and East European Journal</i>	4	0.9	1	0.6
<i>Hispania</i>	90	20.3	20	11.6
<i>Modern Language Journal</i>	123	27.5	34	19.7
<i>PMLA</i>	9	2.0	12	6.9
Others	2	0.4	—	—
Total	431	96.2	135	78.0
Membership in FL Teachers Associations				
AATF	149	33.3	68	39.3
AATG	23	5.1	3	1.7
AATI	12	2.7	1	0.6
AATSEEL	3	0.7	3	1.7
AATSP	81	18.1	18	10.4
MLA	41	9.2	19	11.0
NEMLA	7	0.6	2	1.2
Total	316	70.5	114	65.9

VII. GEOGRAPHIC SOURCE OF DEGREES

STATE OR COUNTRY	PUBLIC			PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL		
	B.A.	M.A.	Ph.D.	B.A.	M.A.	Ph.D.
California	2	1		1	1	
Colorado	1					
Connecticut	143	89	2	19	8	2
Delaware				2		
D.C.	9	3		1		
Florida	3			1		
Illinois	4	4		1		
Indiana	1			6		
Iowa		1				
Kansas				1		
Kentucky	1					
Louisiana	2					
Maine	24			7		
Maryland	3	2		1		1
Massachusetts	84	29		51	14	
Michigan	2	3		1	1	
Minnesota	2			1	2	
Mississippi	1					
Missouri	2			2		
Nebraska				1		
New Hampshire	8	1		2		
New Jersey	9			9	3	1
New Mexico		1				
New York	66	45	1	26	23	3
North Carolina	2	3		1		
North Dakota				1		
Ohio	3	2		3	2	
Oklahoma		1				
Oregon					1	
Pennsylvania	12	1		2	1	
Rhode Island	10	3		4	2	
South Carolina	1					
Tennessee	1			1		
Texas	2	1				
Vermont	23	33		5	10	
Virginia	1	1		2	2	
Washington	2	1				
Wisconsin	2	6		1	2	
Canada					2	
England				2	1	
France	2	1		9	3	
Germany	2			2	1	
Holland				1	1	
Italy	1			1		
Mexico	3	2		1		
Poland	1					
Russia				1		
Scotland						1
Spain				1		
Sweden				1		
Yugoslavia	1			1		

the jokes about football coaches who spend their mornings teaching Spanish, it is comforting to note that the list includes only one undergraduate and one graduate major in Physical Education.

Table III gives the teachers' own evaluations of their language skills. The questionnaire asked them to indicate which languages they read, un-

derstand, speak, and write with some facility. Their answers are not confined to the languages that they teach. It is interesting, but not surprising, to note that the reading skill is in almost every case the one that most teachers think they possess most fully.

The amount of teaching experience runs from

seven to eleven years in all languages except Russian, whose teachers, for understandable reasons, have a shorter span of experience. Seventy per cent of the high-school teachers are certified to teach French, fifty per cent to teach Spanish, about ten per cent each to teach German and Italian.

NDEA Institutes have enrolled 81 Connecticut

VIII. NON-LANGUAGE MAJORS

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	Undergrad.	Grad.	Undergrad.	Grad.
Administration		12		1
Anthropology	1			
Bacteriology	1			
Biology	1			
Botany	1			
Business Administration	1	1		
Chemistry	1			
Commerce			1	
Commercial Education	1			
Curriculum Teaching		1		
Economics	2		3	
Education	13	68	6	13
Engineering	1			
English	48	19	15	4
Far East Studies				1
Foreign Trade	1	1		
General Studies				1
Geology			1	1
Government	2			1
Guidance		8		
History	15	9	10	6
History of Art			1	
History of Far East	1			
Home Economics	1			

teachers in the summers of 1959 and 1960 and in the academic year 1959-60. Of these, 19 attended second-level Institutes in 1960 after attending first-level Institutes in 1959. If we add other summer study and travel abroad, a third of Connecticut's modern language teachers were improving themselves professionally in the summer of 1960.

As other indications of their degree of profes-

sional involvement, nearly half the public-school teachers attend local and state FL conferences or meetings. But less than one in ten attends a national FL meeting. The attendance record of the non-public-school teachers is much more evenly distributed among local, state, regional, and national meetings. Both public- and non-public-school teachers favor the *French Review*, the

VIII. NON-LANGUAGE MAJORS (Continued)

	PUBLIC		PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL	
	Undergrad.	Grad.	Undergrad.	Grad.
International Relations		1		
Journalism				1
Latin American Affairs				1
Latin American History		1		
Law	1	1		
Letters				1
Liberal Studies		1		
Literature		5		
Marketing	1			
Mathematics	2	1	1	
Music			6	1
Philology		1		
Philosophy	7	2	9	
Physical Education	1	1		
Political Science	4		1	
Psychology	1	2		
Religion		1		
Social Studies	3	3	1	
Sociology	1	1	1	
Speech	1	1		
Theater		1		
Theology			1	4
Zoology		1		

MLJ, and *Hispania*, in this order, for their professional reading. In both groups professional memberships are principally AATF, AATSP, and MLA.

The great majority of Connecticut MFL teachers did their graduate and undergraduate study in the northeastern states, in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Maine, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Rhode Island.